
4.7 HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

This section evaluates potential public health hazards related to the potential exposure to natural hazards and hazardous materials. Seismic and avalanche hazards are addressed in Section 4.5, Geology and Soils.

4.7.1 EXISTING SETTING

A Phase I Environmental Site Assessment (Phase I ESA) was prepared for the project site in June 2015 by Holdrege & Kull (**Appendix 4.7**). The report includes findings regarding environmental concerns at the project site based on a search of relevant records and site reconnaissance. The Phase I ESA made the following findings.

Isolated Areas of Debris. Isolated areas of apparently inert debris were observed on the property, including lumber, precast concrete components, a pile of cured asphalt, and miscellaneous construction and residential debris (see **Figure 4.1-3b**). The presence of these apparently inert materials is considered an adverse environmental condition. However, Holdrege & Kull anticipate that the inert debris will be removed and disposed of as part of site development and that the debris has not significantly impacted the project site. However, if non-inert materials or staining on the ground surface is observed during removal of the debris, sampling and analysis may be appropriate to determine the extent of impact.

Propane Facility and Electrical Substation. The propane facility located on the southern end of the project site and the electrical substation located immediately to the south are considered recognized environmental conditions. However, Holdrege & Kull found no evidence of release and no record of hazardous materials incidents at the propane facility or electrical substation. Therefore, it is not anticipated that these facilities have significantly impacted the project site.

Radon. Twenty-nine percent of radon test results for basements reported in the California Radon database for the site zip code detected radon at concentrations exceeding 4 picocuries per liter (Pci/L), a regulatory benchmark for long-term human exposure to radon in indoor air. This information indicates that the potential for naturally occurring radon is a recognized environmental condition.

Adjacent Properties. Recognized environmental conditions were identified on nearby properties. However, Holdrege & Kull determined that, based on the distance to these sites from the project site and the nature of the environmental conditions reported at these sites, it is not anticipated that the identified sites have had a significant impact on the project site (Holdrege & Kull 2015, pp. 12–13).

EMERGENCY RESPONSE

Access to Squaw Valley is limited by the configuration of the valley and the Truckee River canyon. As a result, there is only one means of ingress and egress (Squaw Valley Road), and a single road (State Route [SR] 89) connects Squaw Valley to adjoining communities. The Wildland Fire Evacuation Plan (SVPSD 2014), which applies to all development in Squaw Valley, includes evacuation protocols, guidance for preparing homes for evacuation, and evacuation routes. The plan calls for evacuating via Squaw Valley Road to SR 89 or, if it is not possible to leave the valley, driving to the Squaw Valley Ski Resort parking lot.

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WILDLAND FIRES

In Placer County, the wildfire hazard extends from early spring to late fall. Fire conditions arise from a combination of hot weather, an accumulation of vegetation, and low moisture content in air and fuel. Wildfire risk is predominantly associated with the wildland-urban interface (where development is interspersed with or adjacent to landscapes that support wildfire) (Placer County 2010, p. 4.97).

The State Board of Forestry identifies those lands where the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (Cal Fire) has the primary duty for wildland fire prevention and suppression; these lands are commonly known as State Responsibility Areas (SRAs). In addition, lands are mapped by the County in two categories: (1) wildland areas that may contain substantial forest fire risks and hazards (wildland areas or SRAs); and (2) very high fire hazard severity zones.

Squaw Valley is located in a State Responsibility Area for management of wildland fire hazards. The project site and surrounding lands are designated as a very high fire hazard severity zone (Cal Fire 2007). Wildfires are an existing substantial threat to the project site and vicinity due to the location of people and structures at an interface with heavy fuel loads, steep terrain, summer dry conditions, and multiple ignition sources.

4.7.2 REGULATORY FRAMEWORK

FEDERAL

US Environmental Protection Agency

The US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) provides leadership in the nation's environmental science, research, education, and assessment efforts. The EPA works closely with other federal agencies, state and local governments, and Native American tribes to develop and enforce regulations under existing environmental laws. The EPA is responsible for researching and setting national standards for a variety of environmental programs, and delegates to states and tribes responsibility for issuing permits and monitoring and enforcing compliance.

Prior to August 1992, the principal agency at the federal level regulating the generation, transport, and disposal of hazardous waste was the EPA under the authority of the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA). As of August 1, 1992, however, the California Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC) was authorized to implement the State's hazardous waste management program for the EPA. The federal EPA continues to regulate hazardous substances under the Comprehensive Environmental Response Compensation and Liability Act.

Other Federal Regulations

Other federal agencies that regulate hazardous materials include the Department of Transportation and the National Institute of Health. The following federal laws and guidelines govern hazardous materials.

- Clean Water Act
- Clean Air Act
- Federal Insecticide, Fungicide, and Rodenticide Act

- Guidelines for Carcinogens and Biohazards
- Superfund Amendments and Reauthorization Act Title III
- Resource Conservation and Recovery Act
- Safe Drinking Water Act
- Toxic Substances Control Act

STATE

California Environmental Protection Agency

The California Environmental Protection Agency (CalEPA) and the State Water Resources Control Board establish rules governing the use of hazardous materials and the management of hazardous waste. Applicable state and local laws include the following:

- Public Safety/Fire Regulations/Building Codes
- Hazardous Waste Control Law
- Hazardous Substances Information and Training Act
- Air Toxics Hot Spots and Emissions Inventory Law
- Underground Storage of Hazardous Substances Act
- Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act

Department of Toxic Substances Control

Within the CalEPA, the DTSC has primary regulatory responsibility, with delegation of enforcement to local jurisdictions that enter into agreements with the state agency, for the management of hazardous materials and the generation, transport, and disposal of hazardous waste under the authority of the Hazardous Waste Control Law. In addition, the DTSC is frequently involved with the cleanup of abandoned mine sites.

California Highway Patrol

A valid Hazardous Materials Transportation License, issued by the California Highway Patrol (CHP), is required by the laws and regulations of the California Vehicle Code Section 3200.5 for transportation of either:

- Hazardous materials shipments for which the display of placards is required by state regulations; or
- Hazardous materials shipments of more than 500 pounds, which would require placards if shipping in greater amounts in the same manner.

The CHP enforces additional requirements on the transportation of explosives, inhalation hazards, and radioactive materials under the authority of the California Vehicle Code.

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Transportation of explosives generally requires consistency with additional rules and regulations for routing, safe stopping distances, and inspection stops (Title 14, California Code of Regulations, Chapter 6, Article 1, Sections 1150–1152.10). Similarly restrictive rules and regulations (Title 13, California Code of Regulations, Chapter 6, Article 2.5, Sections 1157–1157.8) apply to inhalation hazards. Radioactive materials are strictly restricted to specific safe routes for the transportation of such materials.

California Emergency Response Plan

California has developed an Emergency Response Plan to coordinate emergency services provided by federal, state, and local governments and private agencies. Response to hazardous materials incidents is one part of this plan. The plan is managed by the Governor's Office of Emergency Services, which coordinates the responses of other agencies including the CalEPA, California Highway Patrol, California Department of Fish and Wildlife, Regional Water Quality Control Board, Placer County Sheriff's Office, Placer County Office of Emergency Services, and South Placer Fire District.

California Board of Forestry Fire Safe Regulations

In the early 1980s, the California Legislature adopted "Fire Safe" regulations in response to devastating fires in the state's wildlands. These regulations apply to properties within a State Responsibility Area (SRA) where Cal Fire has primary responsibility for wildfire protection. The intent of the Fire Safe program is to minimize the loss of structures, lives, and resources due to uncontrolled wildfires. Fire Safe combines the philosophy of self-protection with the concept of defensible space. Self-protection places some of the burden of fire protection on the homeowner, builder, or developer, incorporating basic fire protection measures into the home or development as it is built. The concept of defensible space provides a reasonably safe location from which firefighters can protect a structure, with a greater potential of saving the structure. Each home, subdivision, and development in the State Responsibility Area should have built into its design adequate emergency equipment access, building and street identification, and a reasonable water supply for fire suppression needs.

LOCAL

Placer County General Plan

The following is a list of General Plan policies that relate to hazards and the proposed project.

- Policy 8.G.1.** The County shall ensure that the use and disposal of hazardous materials in the County complies with local, state, and federal safety standards.
- Policy 8.G.2.** The County shall discourage the development of residences or schools near known hazardous waste disposal or handling facilities.
- Policy 8.G.3.** The County shall review all proposed development projects that manufacture, use, or transport hazardous materials for compliance with the County's Hazardous Waste Management Plan (CHWMP).
- Policy 8.C.1.** The County shall ensure that development in high-fire-hazard areas is designed and constructed in a manner that minimizes the risk from fire hazards and meets all applicable state and County fire standards.

- Policy 8.C.2.** The County shall require that discretionary permits for new development in fire hazard areas be conditioned to include requirements for fire-resistant vegetation, cleared fire breaks, or a long-term comprehensive fuel management program. Fire hazard reduction measures shall be incorporated into the design of development projects in fire hazard areas.
- Policy 8.C.3.** The County shall require that new development meets state, County, and local fire district standards for fire protection.
- Policy 8.C.5.** The County shall ensure that existing and new buildings of public assembly incorporate adequate fire protection measures to reduce the potential loss of life and property in accordance with state and local codes and ordinances.
- Policy 8.C.10.** The County shall continue to implement state fire safety standards through enforcement of the applicable standards contained in the Placer County Land Development Manual.

Squaw Valley General Plan and Land Use Ordinance

The Squaw Valley General Plan and Land Use Ordinance does not contain any policies or standards related to hazardous materials, emergency evacuation plans, or wildland fire.

Squaw Valley Fire Department

The Squaw Valley Fire Department has a Wildland Fire Evacuation Plan that identifies that residents are to utilize Squaw Valley Road to exit the valley using State Route 89. For residents that cannot get out of the valley, they are to travel to the Squaw Valley Resort Parking Lot and wait there.

4.7.3 IMPACTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES

STANDARDS OF SIGNIFICANCE

The impact analysis provided below is based on the application of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines Appendix G environmental checklist. A project is considered to have a significant effect on the environment if it will:

- 1) Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials.
- 2) Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through reasonably foreseeable upset and accident conditions involving the release of hazardous materials into the environment.
- 3) Emit hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school.
- 4) Be located on a site which is included on a list of hazardous materials sites compiled pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5 and, as a result, create a significant hazard to the public or the environment.

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- 5) For a project located within an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within 2 miles of a public airport or public use airport, result in a safety hazard for people residing or working in the project area.
- 6) For a project within the vicinity of a private airstrip, result in a safety hazard for people residing or working in the project area.
- 7) Impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan.
- 8) Expose people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury, or death involving wildland fires, including where wildlands are adjacent to urbanized areas or where residences are intermixed with wildlands.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS NOT DISCUSSED FURTHER

As discussed in the NOP/Initial Study prepared for the proposed project (see **Appendix 1.0**), as well as in Section 4.0, Introduction to the Environmental Analysis, the project would result in no impact or a less than significant impact related to standards of significance 1, 2, 3, 5, and 6 above. Therefore, these issues will not be address further in the EIR.

METHODOLOGY

The following impact analysis is based on the Phase I Environmental Site Assessment prepared for the project site by Holdrege & Kull in July 2015 (see **Appendix 4.7**) as well as the fire hazard severity zone map for the project (Cal Fire 2007) and Placer County's (2010) Local Hazard Mitigation Plan.

PROJECT IMPACTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES

Hazardous Materials (Standard of Significance 4)

Impact 4.7.1 The Phase I ESA prepared for the project site identified multiple recognized environmental concerns on the site, including areas of debris and the potential for naturally occurring radon. This impact would be **potentially significant**.

As described previously, the Phase I ESA prepared for the project site (Holdrege & Kull 2015; **Appendix 4.7**) identified two recognized environmental concerns potentially requiring further action. First, isolated areas of debris were observed on the property, including lumber, precast concrete components, a pile of cured asphalt, and miscellaneous construction and residential debris. While the observed debris was considered inert, if additional materials and/or ground staining under or around these materials is discovered during site development, sampling and further analysis may be necessary to determine the extent of impact. Second, based on radon test results in the project area, there is potential for naturally occurring radon on the site. These conditions require mitigation measures to reduce the **potentially significant** impact.

Mitigation Measures

MM 4.7.1a **Removal of Site Debris and Remediation if Required.** During project construction, all debris on the project site shall be removed and disposed of at an appropriate landfill. Should ground staining be found under or around

any debris on the project site, the applicant shall immediately stop the project and contact Environmental Health Services Hazardous Materials Section. The project shall remain stopped until there is resolution of the contamination problem to the satisfaction of Environmental Health Services and to Lahontan Regional Water Quality Control Board. A note to this effect shall be added to the Improvement Plans where applicable.

MM 4.7.1b Design to Address Radon. Residential structures shall be designed to mitigate for the presence of radon and ensure adequate indoor air quality. Mitigation could include installation of ventilation systems and barriers.

Implementation of mitigation measures **MM 4.7.1a** and **MM 4.7.1b** would reduce this impact to **less than significant** by ensuring that any soil contamination resulting from debris on the project site is mitigated and that residences are designed appropriately to address elevated radon level, if present.

Emergency Response and Evacuation (Standard of Significance 7)

Impact 4.7.2 Project could interfere with emergency evacuation procedures along Squaw Valley Road during emergencies involving wildland fire and other incidents. This impact would be **potentially significant**.

The Squaw Valley Fire Department has a Wildland Fire Evacuation Plan that identifies that residents are to utilize Squaw Valley Road to exit the valley using State Route 89. For residents that cannot get out of the valley, they are to travel to the Squaw Valley Resort Parking Lot and wait there. The Village at Squaw Valley Specific Plan is currently in the process of developing an Emergency Preparedness and Evacuation Plan that would be adopted with the specific plan.

Assuming peak summer conditions and 100% occupancy in Squaw Valley, it is estimated that it would take 2.9 hours to evacuate the valley under existing conditions (Placer County, 2016). However, it is anticipated that a wildland fire would take time to develop and would not be an instantaneous hazard requiring prompt evacuation of the valley given the size of the valley and current barriers to the rapid spread of a wildlife (e.g., forest thinning from existing development and the lack of fuel associated with the meadow area and golf course).

Squaw Valley Road serves as the only means of ingress and egress to the valley. The project site would be accessed from Creeks End Court via Squaw Valley Road. Project construction would generate worker vehicle trips and could impede traffic as a result of heavy equipment movement and materials import and export. In addition, proposed roadway and frontage improvements could require temporary lane closures, which could interfere with emergency response and/or evacuation. Implementation of mitigation measure MM 4.7.2 is required to reduce this impact.

The proposed project's internal roadway design and multiple access points to Creeks End Court have been approved by the Squaw Valley Fire Department (Squaw Valley Fire Department, 2015) and would not allow parking on the internal roadways to allow vehicle and emergency vehicle passage. The project is within 0.25 miles from the Squaw Valley Road/State Route 89 intersection that would allow residents to escape north or south. In addition, the project borders State Route 89 to the east that would allow project residents to escape on foot if Squaw Valley Road is at gridlock and/or is otherwise inaccessible. Thus, project residents would not interfere with emergency evacuation procedures and would have multiple options for evacuating the valley.

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Mitigation Measures

MM 4.7.2 **Development and Implementation of a Construction Traffic Control Plan.** Prior to project construction activities, the project applicant shall submit to the County Public Works Department for review and approval a Construction Traffic Control Plan. The plan shall include a schedule of construction and anticipated methods of handling traffic for each phase of construction to ensure the safe flow of traffic and adequate emergency access, including maintaining an open lane for vehicle travel at all times.

Implementation of mitigation measure **MM 4.7.2** would reduce this impact to **less than significant** by requiring the preparation and implementation of a Construction Traffic Control Plan, which would ensure that the project's construction traffic, equipment and activities do not interfere with emergency response and/or evacuation.

Wildland Fire Hazards (Standard of Significance 8)

Impact 4.7.3 Implementation of the proposed project would expose people and structures to significant risks associated with wildland fire hazard. This impact would be **less than significant**.

As described previously, wildfires are an existing threat to the project site and vicinity due to the location of people and structures at an interface with heavy fuel loads, steep terrain, summer dry conditions, and multiple ignition sources. In addition, Placer County's (2010) Local Hazard Mitigation Plan estimates that there will be more human-caused wildfires in the region as more people reside in the area on a full-time basis. Therefore, implementation of the proposed project could increase the threat of wildland fire by introducing new residential activity in the region.

Construction of the proposed project would include removal of a significant amount of natural vegetation from the site as well as ongoing vegetation maintenance once the project is constructed and occupied. In addition, all structures developed on the project site would be required to comply with the California Fire Code (Title 24, California Code of Regulations, Part 9), adopted by the County as part of the California Building Code. The project would also result in the extension of water supply infrastructure onto the site and the provision of adequate emergency access per Squaw Valley Public Service District standards. Thus, the project would be designed, constructed and operated in a manner which would promote fire prevention and facilitate emergency response. Therefore, this impact would be **less than significant**.

Mitigation Measures

None required.

4.7.4 CUMULATIVE SETTING, IMPACTS, AND MITIGATION MEASURES

CUMULATIVE SETTING

The cumulative setting for impacts related to hazardous materials consists of the project site and the surrounding properties. The cumulative setting for impacts related to wildland fire consists of eastern Placer County.

CUMULATIVE IMPACTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES**Cumulative Hazards Impacts (Standard of Significance 4)**

Impact 4.7.4 The proposed project would result in the remediation of the hazardous conditions identified on the site and would not involve the routine use, transport, or storage of large volumes of hazardous materials that could result in accidental contamination on- or off-site. Implementation of project mitigation and compliance with existing regulations related to hazardous materials would ensure that the project's contribution to this impact would be **less than cumulatively considerable**.

As discussed under Impact 4.7.1, the project applicant would be required to remediate the recognized environmental concerns identified on the site in the Phase I ESA (see mitigation measures **MM 4.7.1a** and **MM 4.7.1b**). Additionally, the proposed project and other existing, approved, and planned projects in the vicinity would not result in the addition of hazardous materials or otherwise expose the public to such materials over established thresholds. Furthermore, there are no planned or reasonably foreseeable projects in the vicinity of the project site that would involve significant amounts of hazardous materials. Therefore, this impact would be **less than cumulatively considerable**.

Mitigation Measures

No additional mitigation measures are required.

Cumulative Wildland Fire Hazards (Standard of Significance 4)

Impact 4.7.5 Development of the project in conjunction with other approved, planned, and reasonably foreseeable development projects in the region would incrementally increase exposure of persons and structures to the risk of wildland fire. The proposed project's contribution to this impact would be **less than cumulatively considerable**.

As described previously, ongoing development in the region, including the proposed project, is expected to result in more human-caused wildfires in the region and could impede emergency evacuation of the valley in the event of a wildland fire. However, all structures in Placer County are required to comply with the California Fire Code and ensure adequate water supply and emergency access to promote fire prevention and facilitate emergency response.

It is estimated that under year 2040 conditions that includes the development of the Village at Squaw Valley Specific Plan, evacuation of Squaw Valley during the peak summer conditions with 100% occupancy of the valley could take 6.6 hours to up to 10.7 hours (assuming a special event was occurring at the same time) (Placer County, 2016). However, it is anticipated that wildlife conditions would take time to develop and would not be an instantaneous hazard requiring prompt evacuation of the valley given the size of the valley and current barriers to the rapid spread of a wildlife (e.g., forest thinning from existing development and the lack of fuel associated with the meadow area and golf course).

As identified in Impact 4.7.2, the proposed project's internal roadway design and multiple access points to Creeks End Court have been approved by the Squaw Valley Fire Department (Squaw Valley Fire Department) and would not allow parking on the internal roadways to allow vehicle and emergency vehicle passage. The project is within 0.25 miles from the Squaw Valley

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Road/State Route 89 intersection that would allow residents to escape north or south. In addition, the project borders State Route 89 to the east, which would allow project residents to escape on foot if Squaw Valley Road is at gridlock and/or is otherwise inaccessible. Thus, project residents would not interfere with emergency evacuation procedures and would have multiple options for evacuating the valley. The Village at Squaw Valley Specific Plan is currently in the process of developing an Emergency Preparedness and Evacuation Plan that would be adopted with the specific plan to address its contribution to this impact.

Furthermore, implementation of mitigation measures **MM 4.7.2** and would minimize the potential for the project to impede emergency evacuation efforts during construction and operation. Therefore, this impact would be **less than cumulatively considerable**.

Mitigation Measures

None required.

REFERENCES

- Cal Fire (California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection). 2007. *Fire Hazard Severity Zones in SRA: Placer County*.
- Holdrege & Kull. 2015. *Phase I Environmental Site Assessment, Palisades at Squaw, APNs 096-230-052 and 096-230-055, Placer County, California*.
- Placer County. 2010. *Placer County Local Hazard Mitigation Plan*.
- Placer County. 2016. *Village at Squaw Valley Specific Plan Final EIR*. April 2016.
- SVPSD (Squaw Valley Public Service District). 2014. *Wildland Fire Evacuation Plan*.
- Squaw Valley Fire Department. 2015. *Approval of The Palisades at Squaw Roadway Design*. November 12, 2015.

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